

the next morning, he explained to him with truth and candor how it had happened that my house had been made the scene of conferences of such a character, he told me he already knew everything which had passed, that so far from taking umbrage at the use made of my house on that occasion, he earnestly wished I would habitually assist at such conferences, being sure I should be useful in moderating the warmer points, and promoting a wholesome and practicable reformation myself."

In the autumn of 1788 Jefferson had asked for a leave of absence for six months. He wished to return to America, where his private affairs demanded his attention. He felt also that his labors should be placed amid the surroundings in which his life was to be passed. Legitimate ambition, also, may have had much to do. With his wish to look again upon the current of home politics, it was, however, to be only a look, or he left France with the intention of being absent no longer than the time specified. His request was granted, and in October, 1789, he sailed for America. Two months later he reached Monticello, after an absence of five years.

JEFFERSON AS SECRETARY OF STATE.

On Jefferson's arrival in America he found awaiting him from President Washington an offer of the Secretaryship of State. For some months he hesitated to accept it, nor was this solicitation feigned. He was by no means insensible to the honor & aid him, and his deep reverence for Washington moved him to immediate acceptance. There were, however, deterrent reasons not to be passed over lightly. He had acquired skill and self-confidence in the duties of Ambassador to France; and, above all things, his ardent wish was to follow as a spectator the course of the French Revolution. To accept the office now tendered him would put upon him more onerous duties, and he had real apprehensions of his lack of familiarity with the routine duties required. Mr. Madison, at the President's request, visited him, and by his representations re-enforced Washington's appeals.